Similarly, under the National Old Age Pension Scheme, all persons above the age of 65 years who are below the poverty line, according to the criterion prescribed by Government of India, are eligible for old age pension.

Rehabilitation of bonded labourers under Centrally Sponsored Schemes

†585.SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has given grant to the States in conformity with their needs for rehabilitation of bonded labourers under Centrally Sponsored Schemes; and

(b) the number of bonded labourers freed and rehabilitated during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Under the Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for rehabilitation of bonded labour, Central assistance is provided to the States for rehabilitation of identified bonded labourers @ Rs.20,000/- per bonded labour which is equally shared by the Central and State Governments on 50:50 basis. The grants are released only on receipt of the Utilization Certificates for the grants released earlier. The number of bonded labourers released and rehabilitated during each of the last two years, State-wise are as under:

Year	Name of the State	No. of bonded labourers released and rehabilitated
2006-07	Uttar Pradesh	104
	West Bengal	93
2007-08	West Bengal	88
	Uttar Pradesh	277
	Bihar	150
	Madhya Pradesh	192
	Haryana	9

Cess under building and other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act

†586.SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount so far collected under the provision of levying 1 per cent cess, for the benefit of workers, on construction work over Rs. 10 lakhs, according to Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996;

(b) the amount incurred on each of the scheme therefrom;

(c) the authority taking care of the remaining amount and how the Government propose to properly utilize this amount; and

(d) whether the cap on collection of cess on construction work over Rs.10 lakhs is proposed to be pushed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The State Governments are responsible for implementation of the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

and Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996 in their respective State. The State Governments are required to constitute State Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, notify State Rules, constitute State Advisory Committee etc. in this respect.

The State Welfare Boards are collecting the cess, formulating and implementing various welfare schemes for building and construction workers. As per information received from the States, an amount of Rs.1042 crore approximately has been collected as cess and a sum of Rs.299 crore approximately has been spent by the States where Act is being implemented on various welfare schemes formulated by them.

The Government has recently taken a decision to extend Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) to the building and other construction workers registered with the Welfare Boards constituted under the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996. The premium under the scheme would be borne by the Welfare Boards.

(d) The issue was discussed in the Central Advisory Committee but no decision has so far been taken in this regard by the Government.

Private Fund Managers for EPF

587. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Employees Provident Fund Trustees Board has decided to have three private fund managers, in addition to the SBI to manage huge EPF despite opposition by trade unions;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the bids by Birla Sun Life and HDFC MF without taking any charge were rejected; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Three Asset Management Companies, namely, HSBC, ICICI Prudential and Reliance Capital have been engaged in addition to the State Bank of India for managing the corpus of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation with the approval of Central Board of Trustees (Employees' Provident Fund) in its meeting held on 29.07.2008.

(c) and (d) A legal opinion was taken on whether a zero bid without any tangible consideration would constitute an enforceable contract. The opinion was in the negative. The above was placed for discussion at the meeting of the Finance and Investment Committee of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation on July 24th, 2008 and also before the Central Board of Trustees (Employees' Provident Fund) on 29.07.2008 and accordingly a decision was taken to disqualify 'zero bidders'.

Workforce as per Census Reports

588. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state: